

PLANE NEWS

Spring 2003

Spring Forward to Airport Events

Collings Foundation

Sixty years ago, World War II united hundreds of thousands of men and women in a battle for freedom and national identity. Today, the Collings Foundation recognizes these patriots with their "Wings of Freedom Tour," a nationwide expedition featuring two symbols of American defense, the B-17G Flying Fortress and B-24J Liberator

bomber. The vintage aircraft will spend three days at Carlsbad's McClellan-Palomar Airport, beginning Friday, April 18.

The Liberator or "Nine O Nine" and Fortress, also known as the "Dragon and His Tail," are rare examples of World War II combat aircraft; the Liberator is the only airworthy one left, and the Fortress is one of eight airworthy machines of this type in existence.

Located at Western Flight, visitors can take a walk-thru tour of the bombers, stand in the cockpits, climb through the bomb bay and sit where actual crewmembers performed war duties decades ago. Thirty-minute flights are available to the public.

This three-day, event begins Friday from 3 - 6:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, the exhibit is open from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The Foundation requests donations of \$8 for adults and \$4 for kids to tour both aircraft.

Rain Washes Out Fallbrook Open House

April showers bring May flowers, but they also wash out special events. For the first time in its history, inclement weather caused cancellation of the Fallbrook Airpark open house.



The annual event is held in conjunction with the community's Avocado Festival and traditionally draws 2-5,000 visitors.

"We're very disappointed," said the airpark's on-site Manager Willie Vasquez. "The bad weather prevented our display aircraft from flying in."

Members of the Palomar R-C Flyers were at the airpark early and anxious for their flight demonstrations, but high winds and occasionally heavy showers quickly dampened their spirits.

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Ramona Air Fair

Get ready for another incredible, fun-filled flight celebration in San Diego's East County. Ramona Airport's ninth annual Ramona Air Fair will be bigger and better than ever, kicking off Friday, May 30 and running through June 1.

From 5 to 10 p.m. Friday, fairgoers can check out aircraft showcases, aviation art exhibits, antique tractor displays, a variety of foods, drinks and more, all beneath the bursting of fireworks and brilliant glow of a hot air balloons. The 1950s rockabilly beat of Hotrod Lincoln will heat up the dance floor from 7 to 10 p.m., Friday evening.



Saturday and Sunday events begin at 9 a.m. with daytime skies decorated by firefighting demonstrations, military fly-bys, airplane rides and skydiving exhibitions. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1 for kids 12 and under, per day.

The airport's first fair in 1995 featured only firefighting plane and helicopter demonstrations. Since then, the event has grown into a three-day, two-night aviation bash, attracting more than 36,000 spectators to the busiest aerial fire fighting attack base in the nation.

Ramona Air Fair sponsors include San Diego County Airports, Ramona Chamber of Commerce, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, KOOL Radio 95.7 FM, BOB Radio 99.3 FM, Chuck Hall Aviation and Pacific Executive.

For more information, call Airport manager Richard Selinger at (760) 788-6174 or check out <http://www.ramonaairfair.org/>.

Wings Over Gillespie

Gillespie Field hosts the ninth annual Wings Over Gillespie Static Air Show landing in El Cajon May 2 – 4. This year's show celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brothers' first successful powered flight.

Air Group One, the San Diego wing of the Commemorative Air Force, calls the event "A salute to American Air Power – Our First 100 Years," and will display an exact replica of the Wright Brothers' inspirational 1903 glider.

General admission is \$10 and military in uniform and children under 10 get in free.

More than sixty aircraft including biplanes from the 1920's, the Ford Tri-Motor, P-51 Mustang, F6F Hellcat, A-26 Invader, F-4 Phantom and the amazing N9M Flying Wing, the motivation for the B-52 bomber, will fill the airport's runway.



Visitors can meet with groups such as Navajo Code Talkers, the Flying Tigers, Tuskegee Airmen and Women's Air Service Pilots, in addition to the Navy's first Hellcat ace, for autographs, books and souvenirs. Aircraft tours, historic aviation displays and personal testimonials by war pilots will demonstrate what life was really like during times of combat. Live patriotic music and shows will take place on stage each day.

Entrance to the show is at the Gillespie Field Administration Building, 1960 Joe Crosson Drive in El Cajon, and gates will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Parking is free. For more information, call Gillespie Field at (619) 956-4800.

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Fallbrook's Fedorchak Bullish on Future

Pilot, restaurateur and FAAC Chair Joe Fedorchak is bullish on Fallbrook Airpark.

"I see it returning as a vibrant, fun airport," he said.

Fedorchak has headed FAAC, the Fallbrook Airpark Advisory Committee, since its inception some six years ago. He sees some very positive steps underway that will improve development at the facility.

"Having a new and aggressive FBO (fixed base operator) is a good thing for the airpark," he said. "In addition, our new Master Plan will play a key role in future development and safety zone improvements are planned. These will make Fallbrook a much better place to fly to and from."

Fedorchak is bullish on Fallbrook itself. He owns El Jardin Restaurant just a stone's throw from the airport. He learned to fly at the airpark in 1978 and owns a Cessna 172 based there.

"We're only a few miles from beaches and the airpark is an access point to the coast desert, golf courses, bed and breakfast inns and a growing art colony and galleries," he said.

Fallbrook Fuel



Pilot fills his airplane from new fuel tank at Fallbrook. The facility is open 24-7 and is completely self-serve. It's located west of the west taxiway.

[compass points]

Airports' Transition Going Smoothly

When Airports Director Rick Jenkins announced his retirement in March, we knew we'd be losing a valuable asset to our organization. We've appointed Sherry Miller as interim director while we search nationwide for a person to fill the spot on a permanent basis.

Sherry is a very capable leader with excellent knowledge of not just our airports and operations, but of community issues, federal and state regulations, and aviation issues as well. I'm confident in her ability to get the job done.

Right now we're reviewing applications and resumes from several applicants for the Director position. We'll announce the new director as soon as possible.

Rick will be missed by us all. Before he got the top slot at Airports, Rick managed Palomar, Fallbrook, and Borrego Valley and was the first on-site manager for Ramona. He saw us through some very complicated issues including reorganization at Fallbrook and improvement projects at Ramona. His Marine Corps pilot background certainly helped him remain calm during some difficult situations. We hope he'll enjoy retirement.

Safe Flying,

Larry Watt

(Editor's note) *Watt heads the Transportation Division and is Deputy Director for the Department of Public Works.*

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Sky's Limit for Special Kids

Physically challenged and seriously ill children and youth from the San Diego area will soar through the clouds in June, thanks to a group of disabled and able-bodied pilots.

Challenge Air for Kids and Friends offers free plane rides Saturday, June 14 at Allen Airways Flying Museum at Gillespie Field (2020 Marshall Avenue).

"Plenty of space is still available for children who are interested in participating," said Local Events Coordinator Kimmer Miller. "Any physically challenged or serious ill child or youth is welcome to pre-register and invite two guests for the flight."

Miller says the day includes an educational ground school, static aircraft display petting zoo, games and a 20-minute flight over local points of interest. She says flights are designed to inspire and motivate participants and shows them through example the many possibilities available to them.

Event sponsors include Southwest Airlines, Allen Airways, Gillespie Field, Culligan Water and others.

To pre-register or get more information, call 1-877-FLY-KIDS or visit the Challenge Air web site at www.challengeair.org.

Agua Caliente Gets Facelift

Pavement on the Agua Caliente runway looks a lot better these days and there's a fresh white stripe down the centerline. These are results from a \$30,000 slurry seal and re-striping project at the airport.

The project, completed mid March, took advantage of a State of California Special Aviation Fund annual allocation. That state program was cancelled this year by Governor Gray Davis due to a statewide budget crisis.



Illuminating Solution for Palomar Lights

Airport users now have a safer journey at McClellan-Palomar. Three solar-powered lights are in place along the path from long term parking to the terminal. The area sits on top of an old landfill.

"We went with these fixtures because there's no need to dig trenches and lay wire through the landfill," said Airport Manager Floyd Best. "The lights are portable and we can move them around if necessary."

It's new technology that powers these lights. A solar panel atop the light pole sends energy to gel-cell batteries and new technology high-energy gas discharge lamps are set on timers. Another advantage, Best points out, is that the lights function even when hard-wired power is not available.

Airports staff is monitoring the lights to determine if they'll be practical for other facilities.



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Towering Project Underway At Ramona



Construction on the new air traffic control tower at Ramona Airport began April 1. Ramona also has nearly 200 based aircraft and is home to the Air Attack Base for the California Department of Forestry and U.S. Forest Service.

The \$1.5 million tower serves a facility with more than 100,000 operations in 2002, and more than 104,000 in 2001.

Gordon-Prill of Mountain View, CA, is the general contractor for the 50-foot structure. Construction is scheduled to be completed in September.



Groundbreaking ceremony for new control tower at Ramona Airport. Pictured (l-r): Rick Perez, project manager for Gordon-Prill; Jessica Shapiro of the FAA; Michael Khoury, County project manager; County Supervisor Dianne Jacob; Public Works Deputy Director Larry Watt.

Palomar Digs Taxiway Alpha Project

Palomar Airport's Taxiway Alpha will soon be wider, realigned and overlaid. The \$4.5 million project is scheduled for completion in August. Work brings the airport into compliance with minimum runway/taxiway separation standards.



Countywide Public Airport Operations in 2002

(County Airports in **Bold**)

1	Montgomery Field**	245,643
2	Lindbergh Field*	206,380
3	McClellan-Palomar	204,289
4	Gillespie Field	183,145
5	Brown Field**	140,822
6	Ramona	100,516****
7	Oceanside***	30,000
8	Fallbrook Airpark	20,968
9	Borrego Valley	18,354
10	Jacumba	2,008
11	Agua Caliente	558
12	Ocotillo	302

** City of San Diego

* Regional Airport Authority

***City of Oceanside

**** Construction project required runway closure

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Tail Section

Pacific Disaster Relief, a local homeland security organization moved into its new headquarters at Gillespie Field. Their address: 1982 N. Marshall Ave., Suite 103...Super Bowl Sunday was rockin' at **Western Flight** at Palomar Airport. Some 300 pilots and aviation enthusiasts from around the country partied with Mailia's Makuahines, the Bud Girls and Have Table Will Travel...Airports Director **Rick Jenkins** who during his career with the County also served as manager at Palomar and Ramona, retired in March. **Sherry Miller** fills the spot on an interim basis until a new Director is tapped...Organizational Change: The Airports Section of the Department of Public Works shifts back to the department's Transportation Division under Deputy Director **Larry Watt**. For the last couple of years it was under leadership of Assistant Director **Chandra Wallar**...Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Flying Association held its annual Safety and Flight Evaluation Conference and competition at Gillespie Field. The event was hosted by El Cajon's **Christian Heritage College**...Before the **U.S. Army** went to Iraq, it came to San Diego County. No explanation was given for the Army's operations at Agua Caliente, Borrego Valley, Ocotillo and Jacumba. We didn't ask, a glance at local topography was enough.